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CHARGE STATE

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I had lunch alone with Mollet today. He told me I was at liberty to communicate his remarks on EDC ratification to the Department with the request that they be given a strictly limited circulation.

(1) He has not seen Bidault since latter's departure for the Berlin Conference. Mollet requested an appointment with him this week but did not obtain it. Mollet is now going to Brussels and has asked for a meeting next Wednesday and hopes to see Bidault on that day or shortly thereafter. Meanwhile, such conversations as have taken place on behalf of Messrs. Mollet and Bidault have been conducted through intermediaries and have proved unsatisfactory. There has been no agreement reached on the Socialist conditions about democratic control. Mollet's representative effected the delivery to Bidault of the draft transitional convention relative to democratic control of the CSC and the EDC which I am telegraphing simultaneously to the Department. There has been no answer from Bidault to Mollet on this memorandum.

(2) Mollet recently saw Laniel and gave him a copy of the same draft convention. Laniel read it, observed that it seemed to him reasonable but presented problems which he would have to consider.

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Mollet believes one of those problems of ~~xxx~~ considerable importance to the Prime Minister is whether he would not remain longer in office if he postponed as ~~xxxx~~ far as possible the bringing of EDC to a vote. Mollet thinks the Prime Minister owes his already comparatively lengthy tenure of office to the fact that he has so successfully evaded, through a multiplicity of postponements, a resolution of this affair, ~~xxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx

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room for maneuver, the Socialist Parliamentarians would be left to vote as they pleased on the bill and their division for and against might be about fifty-fifty. If the other procedure were adopted he believed he would have ninety votes from his Party for the Treaty.

(5) He ranked the Socialist conditions in point of importance as (a) British association, (b) democratic control over the army, and (c) American assurances. If all three are satisfactory and if the British assurances by any chance would include the integrating of a British QUOTE military land unit UNQUOTE in the EDC, not only would the ninety Socialist votes be delivered in favor of the Treaty but he estimated there would be 400 votes in the Parliament for the Treaty, provided of course the British assurances in other respects would be along the lines previously represented to him.

(6) In regard to the above, he said it would be necessary for the British and American assurances to be communicated to him and to his Party leaders before any of his conventions took place. He thought it preferable they should be publicly announced rather than hawked about for particular party uses such as his own. I told him of our concern over any release of the U. S. assurances at least prior to a definite engagement by the Government which would publicly fix a date for EDC debate. He said we were right in this, for otherwise the Government might use our declaration for negotiation and purposes of delay but that as soon as the Government was pledged we should inform our NATO partners of the content and make it available. If the assurances, and

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in this he was speaking of both the British and American, were satisfactory they would be helpful. If they were not, fault would be found with them sooner or later and it would do no good to have the Government sit on them with the idea that, if suddenly sprung on the Parliament, they would be effective.

(7) Concerning the Government's naming a date for the debate before the Easter recess, he thought this a somewhat academic question since the French Government had already made it apparent by deliberate delays over a period of months that it did not intend such a debate to take place before Easter regardless of what might be asserted or wished by individual members of the Cabinet. It had not been he who was responsible for making a debate and vote impossible before Easter. His Party was not concerned with the Saar agreement. He understood the British were ready to give their assurances but, as he had not been called upon to engage in any serious discussion of the matter of democratic control of the European Army, he could only hope that a Government in which his Party had no membership would be fair enough not to blame its own failings on Socialist intransigeance. He himself would now favor a debate commencing after the Easter recess. It was important this debate should be uninterrupted in the sense that no other item could be brought before Parliament while it was in course.

(8) Mollet did not anticipate that the Geneva Conference would have an adverse effect on the proceedings in the Palais Bourbon although

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it would of course have been preferable to have settled the EDC earlier, which he alleges has long been in the power of the Governm to do.

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[Bruce:CMS]

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